

April 9, 1984

LB 466

CLERK: 25 ayes...26 ayes, 6 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SENATOR CLARK: Debate is ceased. Senator Labeledz, do you wish to close?

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I would guess that Senator Johnson's undocumented statement that other states do not recommend checkoffs began...came from the agency or agencies charged with administering the program. According to the information at our interim study which was LR 157 at the hearing last fall, 31 states now have what they call the Chickadee Checkoff in one form or another and the wildlife management professionals in those states support the programs. There are only four other checkoffs in operation right now other than the wildlife and that is Idaho for the Olympics, Oregon for the arts, Arkansas for football, and Iowa for the public financing of elections. And this could hardly be characterized as a floodgate of checkoffs that we will be opening the gates to in the future. Colorado was the first state to institute a checkoff for wildlife and most neighboring states of Nebraska also do so. Now 31 states have such checkoffs and millions of dollars are raised voluntarily every year, one dollar at a time, to support the nongame wildlife. Another eight states are also contemplating legislation. I want to remind each and every one of you that this will not, as Senator DeCamp said, come out of the general fund. It is a strictly voluntary, as I call it, a voluntary tax and it is mostly not so much for the endangered species as it is for the nongame and this, of course, does not include Senator Haberman's prairie dogs. I urge you to vote for this voluntary contribution to the wildlife and endangered species and let's let the people decide whether or not they want to give one, two or three or four or five dollars to that fund. Another thing I should mention, because of the problem the Department of Revenue would have, only those people receiving a refund can voluntarily contribute to this fund. I urge you to override the Governor's veto. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: The question before the House is overriding